Death is Enough as an Admonition

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All praise is due to Allaah alone, Who decreed death upon every soul and is the only One Who is Eternally Everlasting; may He send salutations and exalt the mention of the seal of all Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muhammad, his family and all his companions and those who follow in their footsteps until the Day of Resurrection.

Death is an indisputable fact; Allaah says what means: ***"And the stupor of death will come in truth; this is what you have been avoiding!"*** *(Qaaf:19)* **Who** can argue about death and its agonies after hearing these words? **Who** can dispute the pressing of the grave? **Who** can delay his death from its appointed time? Allaah says what means: ***"When their term comes, neither can they delay it nor can they advance it an hour (or a moment)."*** *(Al-A'raaf:34)*

O mankind! **Why** are you so arrogant when you will soon be consumed by worms? **Why** do you transgress when you will eventually be thrown into a ditch under the ground? **Why** the delay and heedlessness when you know that death comes suddenly, without any warning? Allaah says what means: ***"Every soul shall have a taste of death; and only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained the object (of Life). For the life of this world is but***

goods and chattels of deception." *(Aal 'Imraan:185)* He also said, ***"Whatsoever is on it (the earth) will perish."*** *(Ar-Rahmaan:26)* He also says : ***"And invoke not any other ilaah (deity) along with Allaah, Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He)."*** *(Al-Qasas:88)*

The Reality of Death

Dear Muslims! He who thinks that death is the final stage of his existence, after which there will be no accountability, no Paradise or Hellfire and no life after that is in serious error. If this was the case, there would have been no wisdom behind creation and existence to start with, and all people would have been equally at rest after death. The believer and the infidel would have been the same: the murderer and his victim, the oppressor and the oppressed, the obedient and the disobedient, the adulterer and the one who guarded his prayers, and so on. This is the belief of the polytheists who are worse than animals. Only one who is shameless and senseless would utter such a statement. Allaah says what means: ***"The disbelievers pretend that they will never be resurrected (for the Account). Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): Yes! By my Lord, you will certainly be resurrected, then you will be informed of (and recompensed for) what you did; and that is easy for Allaah."*** *(At-Taghaabun:7)* He also said: ***"And he***

puts forth for Us a parable, and forgets his own creation. He says: 'Who will give life to these bones after they are rotten and have become dust?' Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): 'He will give life to them Who created them for the first time! And He is the All-Knower of every creation!' " *(Yaa Seen:78-79)*

Death is the stage at which the soul becomes disconnected from the body. As it departs, man moves from one world (life) to another (the Hereafter). One's records of deeds are closed and the opportunity for repentance comes to an end. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"Allah accepts the repentance of His slave until the time of death (i.e. when the soul is departing)."*** *(Tirmithi)*

Death is the Greatest Affliction

Death is the greatest affliction, and Allaah has called it a disaster; Allaah says what means: ***"And the great affliction of death befalls on you."*** *(Al-Maa'idah:106)* If the slave was obedient, he regrets that he did not do more righteous deeds at the time of his death, but if he was disobedient, he regrets his shortcomings and wishes to return to this life so that he could repent and act righteously - but at this point it is too late, Allaah says what means: ***"And if they seek to please Allaah, yet they are not of those who will ever be allowed to please Allaah."*** *(Fussilat:24)* He also

says: ***"Until when death comes to one of them (those who join partners with Allaah), he says: 'My Lord! Send me back so that I may do good in that which I have left behind!' No! It is but a word that he speaks; and behind them is Barzakh (a barrier) until the Day when they will be resurrected."*** *(Al-Mu'minoon:99-100)*

An Admonition of Death

It is narrated that a bedouin was on a trip and his camel dropped dead. So the bedouin descended from the camel's back and circled it saying: *"Why don't you get up? Why do you not come back to life? Your limbs are fine and your body is sound; what is the matter with you? What used to keep you going? What caused you to die? What made you stop moving?"* Then he left the camel in amazement, wondering about what happened to it.

Ibn Sammaak, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *'While a fisherman was fishing, he threw his net in the sea and it came back with a human's skull. He looked at it and started crying and said: 'If you were honorable, your honor did not delay your death! If you were wealthy, your wealth did not delay your death! If you were poor, your poverty did not delay your death! If you were generous, your generosity did not delay your death! If you were strong, your strength did not*

delay your death! If you were a scholar, your knowledge did not delay your death!' He kept repeating these words and crying."

Remember the Destroyer of Pleasures

Honorable Muslim! The Prophet (ﷺ) encouraged us to always remember and mention death saying: ***"Profusely mention the destroyer of pleasures (i.e., death)."*** *(Tirmithi)*

Imaam Qurtubi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *'Our scholars, may Allaah have mercy upon them, said that this statement from the Prophet* (ﷺ) *is short but inclusive of a great reminder, because remembering death and mentioning it frequently is likely to destroy any pleasure one might feel and prevent him from wishing for any other enjoyment in the future, making him indifferent to pleasures which he previously craved. But since people's hearts have become heedless, we now require longer admonitions with more decorated words; otherwise the words of the Prophet* (ﷺ), ***"Profusely mention the destroyer of pleasures,"*** *and the saying of Allaah* (which means): ***"Every soul shall have a taste of death, and only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained the object (of Life), for the life of this world is but goods***

and chattels of deception.” *(Aali ‘Imraan:185) is enough for those who listen and reflect.”*

Ibn ‘Umar*,* may Allaah be pleased with him and his father, said: *‘I came to the Prophet* (ﷺ) *along with nine other people, when a man from the Ansaar (residents of Madeenah) stood up and asked: ‘O Prophet of Allaah! Who is the wisest person?’ He* (ﷺ) *He replied,* ***The one who mentions and contemplates death the most, and the one who prepares for his death the most. These are the wise ones; they gain the glory of this life as well as the honor of the Hereafter.****’ ” (At-Tabaraani & Al-Munthiri)*

Benefits of Mentioning and Contemplating Death

Beloved Muslim! There are many benefits to be gained from mentioning and contemplating death, such as the following:

- It encourages one to prepare for death before it strikes.
- It makes man lose hope in living longer, which is a hope that causes heedlessness.
- It makes a person content with very little, as narrated by *Anas*, may Allaah be pleased with him, that the Prophet (ﷺ) passed by a group of people who were

laughing and said: ***"Profusely mention the destroyer of pleasures,"*** and then he (ﷺ) said: ***"It is never mentioned during the time of need but would make one feel content, and never mentioned during prosperity but would make one feel restricted."*** *(Al-Munthiri & Al-Bazzaar)*

- It makes one inclined towards the Hereafter and the obedience of Allaah.
- It makes worldly hardships seem insignificant.
- It prevents one from greed and extravagance.
- It encourages one to repent and make up for what he missed in the past.
- It softens the heart, makes the eyes shed tears, assists one in becoming committed to Islaam and expels base desires.
- It makes a person humble and prevents arrogance and oppression.
- It makes a person kind and forgiving towards his fellow Muslims.

Limited Breaths

Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said: *'The Prophet* (ﷺ) *drew a square and in the center of it he drew a line, the end of which extended beyond the square. Further across the*

center line he drew few smaller lines, then he (ﷺ) *said:* ***"This illustrates man (i.e., his ambitions), and the encircling square is death which encompasses him; the center line represents his desires and the smaller lines are the adversities he faces through life; if one of them misses him, another one distresses him and if that one misses him another one strikes him."*** *(Bukhaari)*

Imaam Al-Qurtubi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *"The Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed that death is not restricted to a certain age, time or sickness, so that man would always be ready to receive death and be prepared for what comes after it."*

Yazeed Ibn Ar-Riqaashi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, used to address himself saying: *"Who will pray on your behalf after you die? Who will fast on your behalf after you die? Who will please your Lord on your behalf after your death?"* He used to say to people: *"O people! Why do you not cry for the rest of your lives? How can one's situation be when death is seeking him ... the grave is his abode ... the earth is his mattress ... worms are his companions ... and besides this, he is waiting for the greatest horror to befall him (the Hereafter) ... how will his state be then?"* And he then would burst into tears.

At-Tameemi, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said:

"Two things prevented me from enjoying life: remembering death and remembering the questioning in front of Allaah."

Ad-Daqqaaq, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *"He who frequently remembers death will be granted three things: a rapid repentance, a content heart and enthusiasm to worship Allaah; and the one who neglects remembering death will be afflicted with three things: delay in repentance, discontentment and laziness in worshipping Allaah."*

An Admonition

O you who is heedless! Ponder over the agonies of death and its bitter difficulties. Death is a promise which will definitely come true; the thought of death is enough to wound the heart, wet the eyes, disunite people, destroy pleasures and prevent ambitions for this life.

O you who is hoarding wealth, eager to build and prosper in this life! The only wealth you have is your shroud. Your riches will eventually vanish; your body will become ruined. What will happen to the treasures you accumulated? Will they rescue you from the agonies of death? Indeed not! You will be leaving them all behind.

Indeed those who interpreted the saying of Allaah which means: ***"And forget not your portion of lawful enjoyment in this world,"*** *(Al-Qasas:77)* to mean the shroud have done well. It is connected to the previous part of the verse where Allaah says what means: ***"But seek with that (wealth) which Allaah has bestowed on you the home of the Hereafter."*** *(Al-Qasas:77)* This means, 'seek the rewards in the Hereafter (Paradise) by utilizing what Allaah has granted you in this life'. It is a duty upon the Muslim to utilize what Allaah granted him in this life to gain the benefit of the Hereafter; so it is just like saying: 'Do not leave all your wealth behind to be used for your funeral.'

Dear brother! Where is your preparation for death and its agonies? Where is your preparation for the pressing of the grave? Where is your preparation for answering the two angels in the grave? Where is your preparation for the meeting with Allaah, the Most High, the All-Competent?

Al-Hasan*,* may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *"There are some people whose hope to be forgiven made them heedless until they departed from this life having no rewards. If you asked one of them about his delay in repentance, he would say: 'I have positive thoughts about my Lord (i.e., He will not punish me).' How he lies! If he thought positively about his Lord he would act accordingly (i.e., perform good deeds),"* and then he recited the saying of Allaah which means:

"And that thought of yours which you thought about your Lord has brought you to destruction; and you have become (this Day) of those utterly lost!" *(Fussilat: 23)*

***Sa'eed Ibn Al-Jubayr**,* may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *"It is a great deception to disobey Allaah, hoping to be forgiven."*

Things that Remind one of Death

- Visiting the graves: the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***"Visit the graves because they remind you of the Hereafter."*** *(Ahmad)*
- Visiting the places where the dead are washed and witnessing the washing.
- Being around people who are dying to see how they suffer and to try to get them to utter the *Shahaadah.*
- Accompanying funerals and the funeral prayers and attending the burial of the dead.
- Reciting the Qur'aan, especially the verses that mention the agonies of death, like the saying of Allaah which means: ***"And the stupor of death will come in truth: This is what you have been avoiding!"*** *(Qaaf: 19)*

- Having gray hair and becoming sick, because these are two messengers of death.
- Pondering over earthquakes, volcanoes, floods and landslides which remind one of the nearness of death.
- Reading about previous nations who died and vanished.

The Agonies of Death

Dear Muslim! Death has agonies, the extent and severity of which are known only by those who have experienced it. The dying person loses his voice and the ability to scream out in pain; death impairs his body and weakens his limbs and senses, and leaves him with no energy to ask for help. His color changes and each part of his body feels the misery of death until his soul reaches his throat and he loses the link with this life, whereupon he becomes miserable if he is amongst thesinners or joyful if he is from the pious.

- ***'Aa'ishah*** (ﷺ) said: *"During his death sickness, the Prophet* (ﷺ) *had a bowl of water in which he used to dip his hand then wipe his face and say:* ***'There is none worthy of worship but Allaah; indeed death has agonies****.'" (Bukhaari)* In another narration, he (ﷺ) used to say: ***"O Allaah! Help me through the agonies of death."*** *(Tirmithi)*

- ***Yazeed Ibn Tameem***, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *“One who is not prevented from sinning by remembering death and hearing the Qur’aan, nothing else can prevent him, even if he were to see the mountains move in front of his very eyes.”*

The Messengers of Death

It is narrated that one of the Prophets said to the Angel of Death: *“Do you not have any messengers whom you send before you arrive so that people can be aware?*” The angel replied: *“Indeed, I have many messengers: illnesses, gray hair, anxieties and weakness in hearing and sight.”*

Allaah has left no excuses for people by sending these messengers, as He says what means: ***“And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger (to give warning).”*** *(Al-Israa’:15)* He also said: ***“And the warner came to you.”*** *(Faatir:37)* It was said that this refers to the Qur’aan and the Messengers of Allaah. However, *Ibn ‘Abbaas* (رضي الله عنه) said: *“It is when one becomes gray-haired.”*

How do they Die?

Beloved Muslim! Know that a good end only comes

to those who are inwardly and outwardly upon the straight path, and that an evil end comes to those who are corrupt and sinful, remaining so until they die without repenting. One who is upon the straight path but regresses by straying away from it and committing sins will also have an evil end.

Examples of an Evil End

- A man was told to say the *Shahaadah of 'laa ilaaha illallaah'* at the time of his death, but he started to sing because he was obsessed with music.
- Another person who loved to drink alcohol said: *"Give me a glass of alcohol."*

Examples of a Good End

- *Safwaan Ibn Saleem*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, entered upon *Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, during his last moments before death and said to him: *"O Abu 'Abdullaah! I see that death is difficult for you."* He kept consoling him until his face became as bright as a glowing lamp, then *Muahmmad*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *"If you see the situation I am in now you would be thrilled,"* and

then he died.

- *Muhammad Ibn Thaabit Al-Banaani*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: *"I went to remind my father to utter the Shahaadah during his moment of death and said to him: 'O father! Say laa ilaaha illallaah,' and he replied: 'O son! Leave me, I am saying my usual sets of supplications, and I am in the sixth or seventh of them."*
- When *'Abdur Rahmaan Ibn Al-Aswad*, may Allaah have mercy upon him, cried when he was dying, so people asked him about the reason why, and he replied: *"I cry for the inability to pray or fast any more,*" and then he recited the Qur'aan until he died.
- *'Aamir Ibn 'Abdullaah,* may Allaah have mercy upon him, heard the call for prayer during his death sickness and said: *"Take me by my hand to the mosque*." He entered the mosque, joined the congregation in the *Maghrib* prayer, and managed to pray one *Rak'ah* before he died.